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From: Ben Martin <bendicoot@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, February 23, 2015 9:35 PM
To: ETTestimony; Rep. Mushinsky, Mary; Sen. Fasano, Len
Subject: SB570, An Act Concerning Electric Savings And Fixed Bill Fees

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Submitted by Ben Martin 350CT.org

February 24, 2015

Senator Paul Doyle, Representative Lonnie Reed, and distinguished members of the committee:

I am writing to support passage of legislation that would lower and cap the fixed charge for electric service for residential customers at \$10 per month and for small business customers at \$25 per month. Connecticut's residential customers now pay the highest (\$19.25/month; Eversource) and second highest (\$17.25/month; UI) monthly fixed charge for any major electric utility in the region. These charges will slow the economy of CT by preventing most citizens from spending money they have used to pay their energy bills. Higher fixed charges work against the state's commitment to energy efficiency and solar programs, slow the growth of a green jobs economy, and hit hardest those who can least afford to pay.

High fixed charges for electricity are unfair, regressive and unnecessary. While Eversource & UI claim this is needed to pay for storm losses, it is only needed to increase their profits and preserve their stock price. Any losses from weather events from the last few years should have been covered by insurance claims or reserve funds. They will also claim that raising these charges is needed to upgrade and maintain infrastructure. This is also false, as they should not be in the business of providing energy if they are not willing to invest in their own business. The truth is that as a for profit company they are under pressure to grow revenue and with citizens reducing energy use this is becoming more difficult.

The solution is not to ask citizens to pay more but to reduce the cost of providing energy by investing in solar, wind and micro hydro energy infrastructure. If CT were to build renewable energy, where there no fuel cost and minimal maintenance after construction, we could harness low cost, non polluting energy without continuing to raise the charges in struggling families. This is the right path forward and capping the fixed rate for all utilities, including municipal utilities, would encourage this transition and improve CT as a place to live and do business.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Martin

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